



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

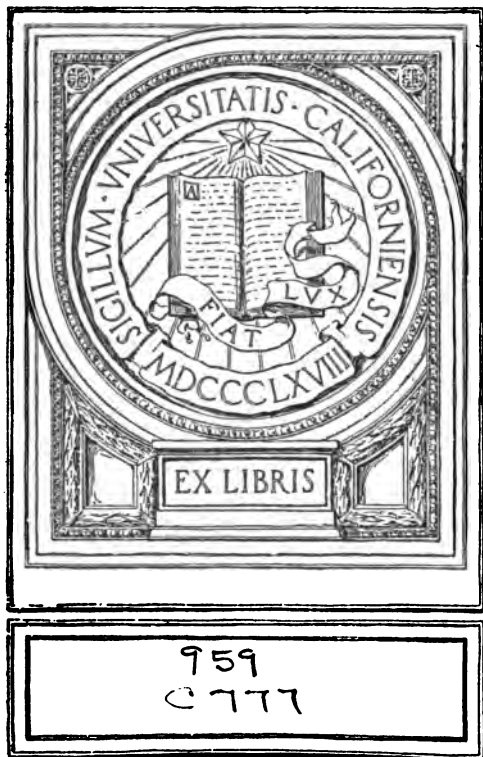
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

UC-NRLF



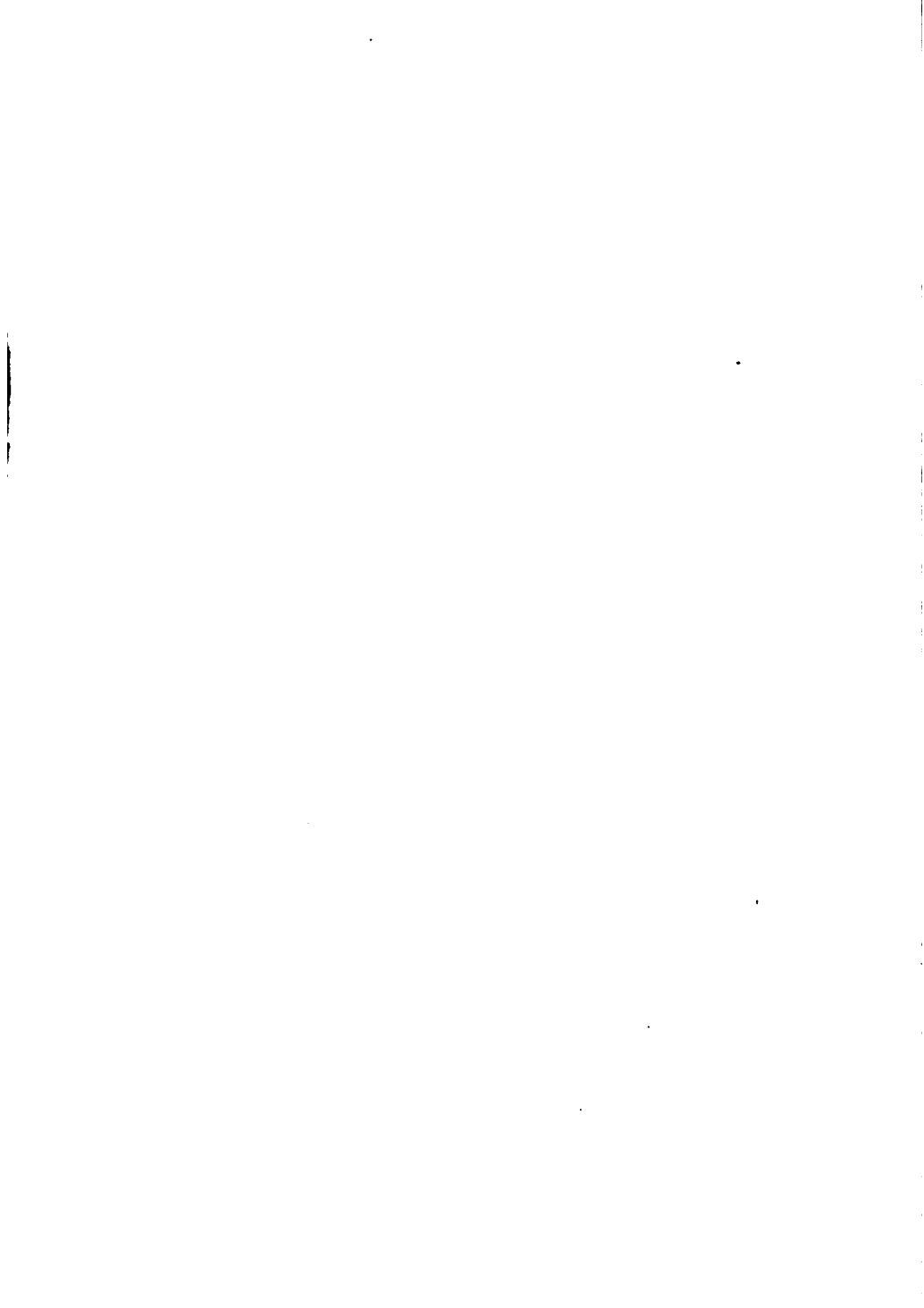
\$B 114 982

YC106204



959
C777





AFTERGLOW



Univ. of
California

TO THE
MEMORIAL



ALLEN & DEMING

James Fenimore Cooper Jr.

AFTERGLOW

By

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER, JR.
CAPTAIN, U. S. A.

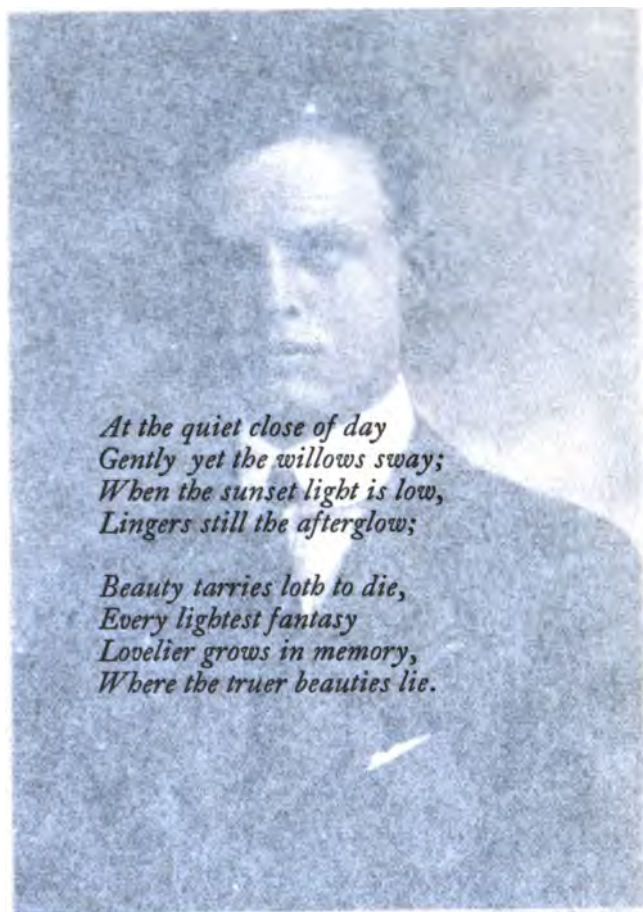
Where the true beauties lie,
Lovelier grows in memory,
Every lightest fantasy
Beauties tamer told to thee.
Lingers still the afterglow;
When the sunset light is low,
Gently yet the willows sway;
At the quiet close of day.

NEW HAVEN

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS

LONDON • HUMPHREY MILFORD • OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

MDCCCXVIII



*At the quiet close of day
Gently yet the willows sway;
When the sunset light is low,
Lingers still the afterglow;*

*Beauty tarries loth to die,
Every lightest fantasy
Lovelier grows in memory,
Where the truer beauties lie.*

James Harrison Cooper, Jr.

AFTERGLOW

By

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER, JR.
CAPTAIN, F. A., N. A.



NEW HAVEN
YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS

LONDON • HUMPHREY MILFORD • OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

MDCCCCXVIII

THE
YALE
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Copyright, 1918, by
Yale University Press

TO THE
ASSOCIATION

FOREWORD

AMONG the young graduates of Yale who have given their lives for their country during the present war, none was of finer spirit and fairer promise, than Captain James Fenimore Cooper of the 308th Field Artillery, who died of pneumonia at Camp Dix, Wrightstown, N. J., on February 17, 1918.

A great-grandson of the novelist, and a son of James and Susan Linn (Sage) Fenimore Cooper, of Albany and Cooperstown, Captain Cooper was born at Albany on March 10, 1892. He was prepared for college at the Albany Academy and the Taft School, Watertown, Conn., and was graduated from Yale with the class of 1913. As an undergraduate, he won high social and academic distinction: was a member of Alpha Delta Phi, Phi Beta Kappa, Chi Delta Theta, the Elihu Club, the Class Day Committee, and secretary of the Elizabethan Club—a list of honors which will serve as testimony to the range of his literary and scholarly activities, for all who are familiar with Yale life. At the time of his death he held the position of class secretary. He was the first member of his class to die in the service. After graduation Cooper spent a year or more

70 1781
A. D. 1781

in Europe and the West, and somewhat over two years at the Harvard Law School. He was a diligent and successful student of the law, but the profession did not appeal to him as a career. His health had never been robust, and after a nervous breakdown, he left Cambridge; and, late in 1916, went to Mesa, Arizona, where he occupied himself for a time in teaching at the Evans School. His plans were somewhat unsettled, but his real interests and ambitions were those of a man of letters; and at the time when his country entered the war, he was looking forward to the life of a farmer, with leisure for writing and study; and expecting to live at Coopers-town, a locality singularly beautiful in itself, for which he had the deep affection of a lover of nature, and which was dear to him on account of generations of family association.

The war, which brought him death, brought him also opportunity—opportunity for unquestioning and decisive action. He entered the first officers' training camp at Madison Barracks, and graduated in August as a First Lieutenant of Field Artillery. Early in the winter of 1918 he was promoted to a captaincy. He showed great aptitude for military work, and became so much interested in the artillery service, that he had made up his mind, if he survived the war, to remain in the army until he had thoroughly mastered that branch. His strong desire was to get to France and into active service at the front, where, at this writing, his battery (Battery B.)

is under the command of his younger brother. But it was not to be. The exposure of artillery drill and camp life brought on an attack of pneumonia, which proved fatal in less than two weeks. The uncomplaining fortitude with which he bore the sufferings of his last days made a deep impression upon his doctors and nurses; and hundreds of letters, written to his parents by his school and college mates and instructors and by a wide circle of family friends, all expressing a sense of personal loss, bear witness to a singular sweetness and generosity, frankness and courtesy which endeared him to all. In them is shown unusual recognition of a character which never departed from the determination to do what was right and to be kind and just to all.

A few of the poems here collected were contributed to the *Yale Literary Magazine* and other college and school periodicals; but for the most part, they are now printed for the first time. This is of the nature of a memorial volume, whose contents derive a pathos from its author's early and heroic death. But no indulgence is asked on that account. Without wishing to compare these verses with the work of such "inheritors of unfulfilled renown" as Rupert Brooke and Alan Seeger, one finds in them a refinement of feeling, a sense of rhythm and poetic form, which give promise of future achievement. They are mainly subjective and introspective, the expression of moods: moods of high though vague aspiration, of self-searchings and unsettled aims.

But attention should be drawn to the spirited *Ballad of the Lost Dutchman*, one of the last poems written, as showing a decided advance in objectivity, concreteness and maturity of style. This was found in Captain Cooper's portfolio after his death; as was also the short essay entitled *Religion*, printed at the end of the volume. This was written over a year ago, and very probably did not express his final views; but is appended to the poems on the supposition that it will be interesting to his friends as a point in his development, and as evidence that his mind was grappling sincerely and courageously with the deepest questions of life.

HENRY A. BEERS.

CONTENTS



"At the Quiet Close of Day"	<i>Facing page 4</i>
Singers—1916	15
A Breeze	16
The Surf	17
Omar Khayyam	18
Sir Galahad	19
The Seer	21
Alone in the Minster	22
Failure	23
The Shadow	24
Valkyrie Song	25
Experience	26
Spirit Song	27
The Last Triumph	28
Possession	31
Song	32
The Moon View	33
Ballad	35
Night	36
Fate	37
Ambition	38
The Great Quest	39
A Memory	40
To a Friend	41

The Old and the New	43
Complaint	44
Winter	45
The Boston Symphony Orchestra	48
A Meeting	49
To a Stone Nymph	50
A Returning	51
Rebellion	52
Death	53
Realization	54
To S. M. S.	55
Wayfarer's Song	57
Creation	58
To Betty	59
A Heretic to His Mistress	60
Isolation	64
Affirmation	65
The False Hope	67
Ethel Leginska	69
Friendship	70
Ave	71
The Sonnet	72
Presence and Absence	73
Poetry	75
Paganism	76
An Answer	79
The Tryst	80
The Ballad of the Lost Dutchman	81
War	87
A Wish for My Book	89
"When Pleasure Dies"	91
Religion	93

AFTERGLOW





SINGERS—1916



ARE ye forgot, ye voices of the past—
Keats, Milton, Wordsworth, Chaucer, and ye
throng
Of others who excelled in lofty song?
Is your unbroken line to end at last?

Where is that seer who scorns the common
blast
Of praise or blame—who stands aloof and
strong
And utters fiery words, words that belong
With theirs, through all the ages to stand fast?

Think not to wear their vestments, O ye vain
Ye weak and tinsel singers of a day;
Only high service wins the poet's name.

Turn ere too late—fan ye the dying flame
Of patriotism in the land, and say
That death is naught if honor yet remain.

A BREEZE



O, EVER, ever do I wend
My listless way, and ever dream
Of meads where scented poppies bend
O'er Lethe's stream.

I search through many a hidden glen,
Stirring the wild flowers as I go;
And sadly do the lilies then
Sway to and fro.

Or often in some silent grove,
When autumn's tints are chilled to brown,
Amongst the withered leaves I move
And waft them down.

The pine trees ever sigh to me
And at my passing rest again;
But I must wander endlessly,
Searching in vain.

O, ever, ever must I wend
My listless way, and still I dream
Of shadowy meads where poppies bend
O'er Lethe's stream.

THE SURF



TO-NIGHT the murmur of the sea
Comes sadly, as the chill winds blow.
A mist hangs o'er the rocks below,
Where breakers follow ceaselessly.
Thus, ages back, on some dim strand
Its fingers stretched beneath the shade
Of mighty, listless fronds, and played
That same low note upon the sand:—
Now keener drives the wild night air,—
Hark! For the voice of Time is there.

OMAR KHAYYAM



I LISTENED to the Sage of Naishapur,
And, as each lovely image drifted by,
I thought I caught amongst the words a sigh
Of vague regret, which no denial would cure.

Yet all was languorous and crystal-pure;—
As drowsy eastern gardens heaped up high
With heavy-scented roses, oft deny
Haphazard beauty, and by art allure.

Dreamer of Persia! Would I were content
To cast aside all thinking, and with thee
To linger ever, careless of the rest!
They say thou art deceived, and thine at best
Is hollow comfort;—yet how magically
Thy silvery voice steals from the Orient!

SIR GALAHAD



How cheerlessly the grasses bend,
Before the evening breeze, and gleam
In shadowed traceries, and blend
In ever-restless curves! I seem
E'en so to wander, aimlessly,
As in a dream.

Mist-like, he came when first the heat
Drew silently a charmèd haze
Above the hills; the drowsy beat
Of noon came faintly through the ways
And devious windings, where the road
Lay all ablaze.

A moment, flashing white, he stood
Beside a mighty, milk-white steed;—
White was his shield amid the wood,
Like the cold moon, when first the seed
Is stirring, and the naked limbs
Wave o'er the mead.

He spoke;— I scarce know what he said
Or what I answered: mystically
His deep eyes shone, as far ahead
Half-seeing, what no man might see,
Half-seeking some strange vision known
To such as he.

E'en as a mist he passed away:
Which drifts amongst the dreary rows
Of reeds, when first the coming day
Lights in the east, and palely glows
O'er swamp and hill. I wonder yet
Whither he goes.

And now he seems to gaze at me
With deep, unquailing eyes, and now
His voice is in the winds which flee
Through yonder pines: "It is my vow:
Maiden, I follow on my quest,
Nor know I how."

THE SEER



STILL do the people clamor? I am old
And know that all is vain. Am I a seer?
And must I still be taunted and reproached
With that strange striving for an unknown
truth
Which once I thought was life? Come, tell them,
then,
That I have found the peace that is beyond;
And ever does the vision haunt me now.
There is a mighty river darkly flowing
Down through the fertile valleys it has carved—
Along the dreary swamp-lands it has formed—
Toiling mysteriously, time without end;
Now silent feeding many a glimmering land—
Now moaning slumberously through all the
night,
Swollen with many floods. And now behold
City on city springing to the light,
And gleaming opalescent on the bays,
Drawing their life from off the brimming stream;
And lo! innumerable fleets that ply
From side to side upon the water's face.
I hear the strife of many by the shores,
Some crying that the stream is guided down
From some still valley in the shadowy hills,
And others, that it poureth of itself:
And now the cities crumble and are gone,
But still the river toileth ceaselessly.

ALONE IN THE MINSTER



THE slender waxen candles gleam
In upward straining points of light;
The grey walls glimmer in their beam,
To rise in shadow out of sight.
Ah! lightly press the ancient keys!
Quickly the first chord, wild and low,
Starts from the sombre pipes, and flees,
An ever-growing, quavering flow—
Far upward, to the empty roof,
Amid the soaring Gothic maze;
An echo, distant and aloof;
A presence, 'mid the ghostly blaze
Of haloed lights; now swelling deep
With added voices, growing still
In curious sadness, full of sleep—
Slow changing turns of chords, that fill
The soul with awe. For even death
Has not effaced the master mind
Of one at least, whose very breath
Breathes in half-magic tones enshrined.
Hark! For the music of a soul
Is present, filling once again,
The dim cathedral halls, where stole
Innumerable souls of men.

FAILURE



COLD is life, as a vast grey sea,
Creeping beneath a shrouded sky;
And still I drift, and would be free,
Following shapes that ever fly;
Grasping at fleeting phantom things
That beckon, and soon go by.

Now they pass me on every side,
Steering ahead with eyes aglow;
They skim adown the seething tide
Following signs I may not know;
Slowly the mists creep in again,
The glimmerings come and go.

O to sail as the Norse of old,
Off from the sandy beach and away—
To face the wind-worn realms of cold,
Beating to southward, day by day,
Over the weary seas; ahead
The gleam of the silent bay.

THE SHADOW



MEN struggle onward with a halting stride,
Perhaps spurred on by some vague hope ahead—
Or, oftener held back and falsely led
By those too weak to hazard the untried.

As ever when the way lies clear and wide,
And some, inspired, cry Forward! comes
instead
A feeble clinging to a hope long dead;
An empty terror, whispering, "Abide."

As when an evening traveller winds his way
Through dreary fastnesses, yet presses down
And views the valley yellow with the sun;

He treads the shadow of the peaks long won,
And turns, confused, to face again the frown
Of rocks, which still cut off the light of day.

VALKYRIE SONG



Down through the mountain ways
Of the dim north,
Keenly our helmets blaze
As we burst forth—
On toward the battle's clash
Fiercely our storm-steeds we lash.

Clear comes the rhythm of blows
The cold sword's ring,—
Forward the victor goes,
The lean ranks swing!
Swift fall the trampled dead;
Swift flows the heart-blood's deep red!

Choose we the heroes slain,
Up, with them, up—
For they shall drink again
Of the rich cup,—
Wildly we'll feast them all
In great Valhalla's blest hall.

EXPERIENCE



I LOVED them never, these sombre tales—
Dost thou still speak more?
Is it of how the strong soul fails,
Dying, where life was free before?
Say what *my* care avails?

It was not so in the bright years past,
Then thou mad'st no moan;
The greatest truth need not come last—
Or must I harden my heart to stone
That reason may yet stand fast?

No! But thou shalt not pass me by!
I will drink thee deep;
Even if pleasure's lure must fly,
Better it were than bestial sleep.
Shines not the same blue sky?

SPIRIT SONG



WRAPT in solitude am I
Through the golden summer day,
Come, ye dreamers, draw ye nigh,
Where the woodlands wild have sway.

Come where foam-flecked rivers pour
By the swiftly moving trees,
Murmurous against the shore
With a song of distant seas.

Come where charmèd waters lie
Circled by the dun morass,
And the silent herons fly
Startled o'er the sweeping grass.

Come and tarry when the moon
Penetrates the silvered trees,
And the swaying needles croon
Sweetly to the passing breeze.

Seek but there and ye shall find,
Where I cast my secret spell,
Subtle runes that strangely wind—
Ye alone may know them well.

THE LAST TRIUMPH



WHEN shall it be said,
He is dead—
Will they crowd me near
Aping reverent fear,
By the pallid head
Once so dear?

It shall not be so,
That I know:
Better far to die
As the mists which fly
Where the meadows glow
To the sky.

Ne'er a pious crowd
Weeping loud:
They'll not pen me in
Where God's air is thin,
Scented of the shroud,—
Free I've been.

O for some wild vale
Deep and pale,
Where the aspen trees
Chatter in the breeze—
In their branches frail
Silvery seas.

Death might blanch my face,
In that place,
Nay but I would smile
Cunningly the while
As the form I'd trace
Of my wile.

How I'll curse them then,
Tiny men!
How they cheat and fight,
Prating of the right:
But to cheat again
Their delight.

Great my joy will grow
As their woe,—
Long they've wished me wrong,
I've held silent long,
Ne'er from me they'll know
Life's sweet song.

Deep they'd envy me,
Could they see,
How the precious thing
From the world I'll fling—
Vain would be their plea,
Keen their sting!

* * * *

But it will be late
Then, to hate:
Knowing that in vain
They must strive and strain,

I'll but leave their fate
And the pain.

Soft! The fleet day flies
From the skies;
Soon my soul will sweep
From its semi-sleep,
Where great nature's eyes
Vigil keep.

POSSESSION



"THE world is mine," the poet said,
"And everywhere I go
Its beauties linger in my head
And form my treasures so.

"I ofttimes chance upon a stream
On some bright summer's day,
And lo! I catch the very gleam
And carry it away.

"I pass the landlord's frowning gate
And stay a little there,—
I steal his garden's hoarded state
As others would not dare.

"And oft upon an upland road
I pause awhile to see,
And miles and miles of fields new mowed
I take away with me.

"What matter if the day be fled,
I own each brilliant view;
The world is mine," the poet said,—
I half believed it true.

SONG



DRINK of my sleepy wizard draught:
Drink, for your cares slip near like ghosts;
Swiftly they'll flee, and in I'll waft
Wonderful, silken shadowy hosts,—
Slowly they'll weave and beckon on,—
On to a world without a stain:—
Deep, drink deep, if you would don
Silvery summer moods again.
See all around you life's dull grey,
Far from the joys fine souls require:—
Shrink from the blighting hues of day,
Come to the dusk land of desire.
Love you the sun-tense woodland sounds,
Or the cool strains of singing flute?
Drink! thy best pleasure thee surrounds,
Drink! and the chords of life are mute.
Wander in the realms of dreams
Stay, till all is as it seems;
Never wake until the end,—
Yes, the end is but of dreams.

THE MOON VIEW



A LUMINOUS light veil is hung
Along the winding river way
The dimly outlined hills among.

Above, the moon now takes her way
In a wild radiant orb of haze,
Alight with memory of the day :

And a half-reverent silence stays
The very wind, which all day sprang
Along the fretted cedarn ways.

Some brooding spirit seems to hang
Above the earth, and seems to sing
Some song which anciently she sang—

Once—in the moonlight's shimmering—
Crooned to an earth unguessed by man—
The haunt of many an unnamed thing;

When, as to-night, the huge hills ran
That sweeping line above the mist
And the wide-journeying moon began.

E'en Time, the subtle alchemist,
But casts his hues upon earth's face,
As limpid waters sunset-kist.

And we,—but travellers in a place
Where all besides is fixed and old—
Or are we Age's latest trace?

BALLAD



'Tis midnight in the castle tower
As my lady passes there.
She shields her candle as she may
From the chill-starting air;
Wan shines her face against the light,
And the veil of her gold hair.

She climbs to where the lonely wind
Starts by the parapet;
Where ceaselessly about the walls
The dead leaves scritch and fret;
And sorely does my lady sigh,
And her pale cheek is wet.

Hark! Far upon the open moor
Has come the shrill cock's call;
And soft she treads adown the stair
And in the lofty hall;
And she shrinks beneath the armor's glint
From its proud place on the wall.

* * * * *

At noon my lord may wind his horn
Before the castle gate
And long may curb his fretful horse,
And turn again to wait;
The wind is singing in the pines:
My lady tarries late.

NIGHT



ABOVE the limpid stretches comes a cry,
And yet another, and a secret fear
Stirs deeply in the hearts of all that hear;
And nervously the white boats hurry by.

Swift the wide-sketching silvery ripples fly,
And cross, and change along the greyish mere,
As many faces crowd the spot, and peer
In anxious eagerness, they scarce know why.

And yet the lake, the beauteous, seems to glide
From tint to tint, and the light archèd trees
Caress the water, and the glittering beach
Still bends its slender curves in many a reach
Of shallow coves. But men can only see
The whitish limbs,—and silent, drift aside.

FATE



ARE we mere pieces in the hand
That moves this universal Game—
Whom one by one some Power has planned
To follow some predestined aim?
Then Hope, thy burning words erase;
This world is but an abject place.

Are we a small and helpless kin
Wide-strewn upon this planet's face
Who, finding little cheer within,
Beseech some cold indifferent Grace?
Far better, then, no boon to seek
For they should perish who are weak.

O praise not him who fears his God
But show me him who knows not fear!
Who, springing from this common clod
Lives out himself; then may appear
The virtues that a whole world sees,
The by-words of the centuries.

AMBITION



LIKE some faint bell far out at sea,
When the west wind is moaning high
And fast the smoke-edged breakers fly,
Thy warning comes incessantly.

Like fingers of the northern gleam
Against the black of winter skies,
Thy biddings still amaze my eyes
In vast and ghostly shadow-scheme.

Through many paths, by night and day,
Unfathoming, I follow thee,
For thou appearest real to me
Above a phantom-haunted way.

THE GREAT QUEST



O SPIRIT infinitely bright
That dost invest the circling sky
And dwellest in the moon by night,
On thee unceasingly we cry.

When vanquished are the gods and creeds
When superstition's jewels are reft,
Where is it that thy promise leads?
What in a rifled world is left?

We clasped the ancient forms of clay
On whose chill lips thy sign was prest—
We bowed to them for many a day—
Yet they lie shattered with the rest.

They bade us bend before their shrine
They spun strange tales of faery lore—
They bound us with their holy sign:
We turned from them for evermore.

Attend us—we that cry to thee—
Shed on our eyes that sacred light,
Else toil we on a trackless sea
Storm driven, through eternal night!

A MEMORY



WELL I remember
A night when thou didst beckon at the door—
I followed, and beneath the garden pine
We sat together, and as ne'er before
I gazed at thee.

There in the semi-light, which filtered out
From the low windows: there where music came
And sounds of dancing steps,
There for a few brief moments did I see
Thy pure face—thy black lashes, thy chaste eyes
Half closed, and at thy breast
A red rose pinned.

Well I remember,
Never can I forget.

TO A FRIEND



THY voice, as tender as the light
That shivers low at eve—
Thy hair, where myriad flashes bright
Do in and outward weave—
Thy charms in their diversity
Half frighten and astonish me.

Thy hands, that move above the keys
With eager touch and swift—
Whereby thy mind, with magic ease
Doth into music drift—
They fill me with a strange delight
That doth defy expression quite.

Thine eyes, that hold a mirth subdued—
Like deep pools scattering fire—
Mine dare not meet them in their mood,
For fear of my desire,
Lest thou that secret do descry
Which evermore I must deny.

Thy very quiet dignity
Thy silence, too, I love—
Nay—thy light word is destiny
Decreed in spheres above—
My mind, my heart is bowed to thee,
And hard it is that I must flee.

Hard is a world that dare not give
For every love a place:
Hard is a power that bids us live
A life bereft of grace—
Hard, hard to lose thy figure dear,
My star and my religion here!

THE OLD AND THE NEW



SAY not I've known thee but of late:
Nay, love, that cannot be:
'Tis a long wait and a sad wait
That my heart has had for thee.

I've glimpsed thee all the summer long
Athwart the wavering trees
And the wind's song was thy song,
And the singing of the breeze.

In every joy I've summoned thee
And thou hast known my fears:
Thou hast led me, yet fled me
Through the mazes of the years.

What though we wandered many a day?
Our fate had bound us fast,
And thy way and my way
Were sure to cross at last.

Then meet we but to part, my love?
That word thou canst not say;
'Tis a true love, and a life's love,
And it turneth not away.

COMPLAINT



I'VE something I would sing to thee
Now the year is old
And the tempest's bold,
And the stars are clear and cold.

I've something I would sing to thee
When all meads are green
And the sky's serene
And the flower-scents float unseen.

I've something I would sing to thee—
Which the pine trees croon
To the summer moon—
But thou scorn'st my tune!

WINTER



HAIL Winter! Come, death-bearer high,
Inscribe thy incantations grey
Upon the vastness of the sky!
Strike down the trees, and tear away
The tattered garments of the leaves
While the rich heart of Autumn grieves.

The fields are blasted fearing thee—
The living brook is chilled to stone—
Thou comest ever ruthlessly
And dwell'st eternally alone;
The multitudinous birds are flown—
Thine are the pathways of the trees,
Thine are the lowland mysteries.

Astound once more the sleeping hills
With those swift minions of thy train
The sorrowing winds, whose crying fills
The countryside—twisting amain
The pines that shiver in their pain—
Shrieking aloud their ghostly glee
In ever wider revelry.

And often, when the winds are still,
Conjure the softly falling snow
Upon the waiting woods until

The cedar boughs are freighted low:
And let the earliest daylight's glow
Find all the world a white expanse
Save where the spidery trees advance.

And be it mine sometime to see
The moon reign o'er some frosty night—
And bathe with crystal clarity
The meadows alabaster white—
And trace its myriad shadows light
Upon the surface of the snow,
And fleck the silent stream below.

And let me feel thy keenest days—
When the hard glint is on the crust,
And thread the naked forest maze
Lashed with the cruel-driving dust—
Hearing the wind forever thrust
The clacking branches to and fro
As its wild currents pause or flow;

Or watch the sun's pale orb dip down
Early below the mountain rim
And leave an evanescent crown
Of gold upon the tree-tops dim,
Outlining every feathered limb;
Until the drawing-in of night
Erase the ambient color quite.

And ever let the logs at eve
Be emblems bright of inner cheer—
However high the tempest grieve

Defiant merriment reign here,
And as the midnight hour draws near
Let more discordant sounds take flight
To fit the embers' fainter light.

Winter, the keener days are thine,
The nights of deeper mystery;
Make of the whitened town thy shrine,
The fenced and tortured land set free—
Bring back that younger world with thee
That summons to the ancient strife,
That sense of a forgotten life.

THE BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



DARK-COATED men with instruments: a sound,
Tentative, groping—as each seeks to pitch
This string to that—this key—one knows not
which,
Each questioning note by other questions
drowned.
The blundering horns, with shining mouths and
round,
The 'cellos quivering their contralto rich,
The pastoral flutes, whose crystal notes bewitch,
Expectant all—till some accord be found.
The leader lifts his slender rod, and lo,
The turmoil dies—and as we strain to hear
With one quick sweep the miracle is done—
A myriad wandering tones are bound in one—
One many-throated voice, impassioned, clear,
Instinct with things we seek but cannot know.

A MEETING



A PRETTY face and a graceful form,
And the music ringing in your ears,
And the dance is swift, and the blood is warm—
Then away with cringing fears!

Yes, I met her once in the soft lamp light
And the light of that bright room was she—
And we danced adown the summer night—
What had she to do with me?

O we thread our days in a waking sleep
Down the dreary paths of toil and ease—
But in sacred moments to life we leap,
And this was but one of these.

All of life was writ in her dark brown eyes
And the smooth black magic of her hair—
What cared we for talk of “whens” and “whys”?
She and I and Youth were there.

You may have your immortality,
And content this world I'll travel through,
Where all time and all eternity
Lie within an hour or two.

TO A STONE NYMPH



POISED on the brink of what clear pool wast
thou?

What faery spring sent that exquisite chill
That held thee there that moment? Answer how
Thou cam'st transfixed and still?

Surely he caught thee with his human stare
Unwitting, and thou wast amazed to stone
Ere of his presence rude thou wast aware
In those retreats unknown.

I know thou canst not long endure the spell:
Soon, soon wilt thou awaken with the dawn,
And touching that imaginary well,
Wilt shiver—and be gone!

A RETURNING



It seemed a cup of shining gold,
I raised it to my lips to drink—
It was the draught of endless bliss:
But ere its edge had met my kiss
While my soul reeled at pleasure's brink,
It vanished! And the world was cold.

And though I dwelt in long despair
And dreamt thereon by night and day,
It lighted not my hours for me:
E'en as I yearned that sight to see
The hope grew dim and far away,
The darkness heavier to bear.

And sudden dost thou rise again
Alight with days I had forgot?
Thou very goal of my desire!
Nay, where is all that orient fire?
O empty spectre! Whisper not
That e'en such visions end in pain!

REBELLION



JUSTICE and law—morality—
Highest boasts of the human brain—
What are ye all, next to yon hill-slope
And the woodlands wet with rain?
To the fragrant woodlands wet with rain
And the lightening-red in the sky—
What bring your dead philosophies
To the moment that fleeteth by?

Sweet are the clouds that stretch above
Wrapt in the yellow evening light—
Delicate airy shapes that move
In a slow dance out of sight—
In a silent slow dance out of sight
Ne'er to be seen again.
Yet to me they shine with a light unseen
Like words of an old refrain.

Never was wisdom half so deep
Never was word so true
As the fleeting gleam of yonder lake—
As the sweep of the open view—
Give me the sweep of the open view
Where the outstretched foothills lie,
And a straight road shining down the vale,
And the burn of a sapphire sky!

DEATH



I saw at night upon the sky
The clear path of a meteorite
Blaze down unmeasured space and die;

As if indeed the heavens were cleft
By God's bright finger, and again
Only the winking stars were left.

My thoughts sang through their orbits high:
My restless spirit questioned "why?"

REALIZATION



Now we have parted, and the day
Brings not the hope of seeing thee—
Now thou hast taken that dark way
That long I feared—one thing I pray:
Forget me not!

By daylight and by moonlight grey
I swear I only think of thee;
And often stopping by the way
I say the things I did not say:
Forget me not!

O chide, upbraid me if thou wilt,
I'll own my failings every one—
Forswear the dreams that we have built—
I only ask to know my guilt—
Forget me not!

Thy silence haunts me day by day
And whispereth that in thy joy
Of living, I am cast away—
Yet once—O once—to thee I'll say
Forget me not!

TO S. M. S.



I WOULD remember thee as at those moments
When, novice-like, I waited at thy feet,
And glimpse by glimpse thou didst reveal to me
The glorious vistas and the noble plans
Of which thy life was made; when all the wisdom
That thou hadst gathered in thy many years
Fell from thee like a soft and grateful light.

I would remember thee as thou didst live
Surrounded by thy children and their children,
Watching and hoping—planning out for each
What each should do—standing above us all—
Bearing within thyself our inspiration;
Eager to help, earnest and quick to praise.

We grew and lived about thee—went our ways,
But ever were we turning back to thee;
And thou didst know us in our wanderings.

We do not weep thee—thou who didst meet
death
Proudly yet meekly—who on that last day
With eyes unbound didst render up thy life

In thankfulness and peace. We weep thee not,
For full completion never can be sad.

'Twas shining victory, remote from fear—
'Twas a brief passing to the perfect end
Of that unswerving life!

I know not if thou soughtst eternal life;
I only hope thou hast it, and to-day
Thou livest on in us or some of us
And ever wilt—in courage, love of truth,
In wisdom or in quiet charity!

WAYFARER'S SONG



WHERE love is warm and hearts are true,
Where man can strike and yet forgive,
Where mirth is bold and skies are blue
My life I'll live—my life I'll live!

When faith and hope are ever high
We'll all stride singing down the way,
And though destruction's self be nigh
We'll still be gay—we'll still be gay!

Through all the watches of the night
Our shout will rise against the sky;
Howe'er the tempest vent its might
We'll scorn to fly—we'll scorn to fly!

Nay when the world comes hard and grey
And calculation's throned on high
And fat contentment holds his sway
A thousand thousand times—I'll die!

CREATION



Out of the stress of thought and all the sadness,
Out of the fight for truth—the hate of wrong,
E'en from the fiery moment of our madness—
Glitters there forth a diamond of song!

TO BETTY



BETTY of the laughing face,
Betty of the footstep light,
You who flit from place to place,
Partly human, partly sprite—
Betty, when I think of you,
Howso'er the years advance,
I'll forget my sadness too
And with you my heart will dance!

A HERETIC TO HIS MISTRESS



ONE word to thee—since I saw thee stand
That evening which seems so long gone by—
When the iron latch was at thy hand
And thy hair in the candle-beam did fly
And I caught the lightning of thine eye—
O the thousand ventures that I planned!

A word to thee—even far away
In the town in the dun Westmoreland hills
Where'er thou art! For a thought they say
Speeds like a winged shaft, and thrills
Into the soul when a strong man wills—
I send my warm love to thee to-day!

(How? Do ye heap the fagots high?
Pitiful weaklings! What care I
For these puny ropes on my hands and feet
Next to life like thine were dying sweet!)

I should have told thee—but that short week
When I hid and dodged them from place to place
How could an outcast wanderer speak
Who scarcely dared to view thy face?
And the blessed moments fled apace
And the vengeance came which they sought to
wreak.

But thou art mine—'tis the one thing true—
For look met look, yea and hand touched hand
And the winged minutes like swallows flew—
And I left thee—e'en as the hungry band
Beat at the door—thysself did stand
And baffle the villains once anew.

No; I spake not then—hence I tell thee now—
For what harm now can the telling do?
What care the mob for my furrowed brow
And the pure, deep, placid thoughts of you?
I breathe it to you—my heart is true—
Forever true to you, Mary Low!

(Fie on you wretched herding sheep!
Thinking ye wake, ye do but sleep—
Toil and pleasure—day by day
Till the living spark be cast away!
Would that this fire that springs below
Into your bigot souls would glow!)

I would not bow to the Tortured one?
The holy writing I stamped and tore?
I tell thee, Mary, yon rising sun
Is more than the symbols that they bore.
More than the blind gods they adore.
Or the Triple Lie of the three in one!

Long is the toil and hard the way
Searching and thinking—day and night—
Winning and failing—ere a ray
Shines on the fighter of the fight—

Shines on the seeker for the light—
Sudden the veil is torn away.

Mary, those years of slavery,
Mary, those weary, sleepless years
Carried me once, eternally
Out of the clash of hopes and fears
On the bold course a free man steers:
Then to the haven light—to *thee!*

(Now the keen fire is creeping high!
Curse me, ye villians! I would die
Blest with your curses—stoned and gibed
Till the very dregs I have imbibed
The dregs of envy—the dregs of fear
That choke life's wine when the end is near!)

Ye holy gods of the summer night
Ye gods that ride in the hard west wind
And ye that live in the planets' light—
Ye in my heart had I enshrined—
Heaven enraptured, earth entwined.
I ever lived a happy wight.

Mary, I deemed that this was all.
Deeply alert, I strode along
Searching and following the call
When my startled soul burst into song
And I knew that the nameless gods were wrong
And my life was pitiful and small!

The fire rises—I die—
A word to thee—'tis the candle-flame—
It is enough that I once have lived
Do thou live too!

(God's curse upon ye all!)

ISOLATION



ETERNALLY apart are we,
And as the planets glide
Their narrow ways unchangingly
'Mid all the starry tide,
So must we live
And fitful light to others give.

Eternally apart are we
Beyond the keenest sight:
I have my own adversity
To guide my course aright,
Nor canst thou know
The things I seek, nor where I go.

Then do thou treasure jealously
The flash that comes and dies,
Engrave it on thy memory—
Make it thy dearest prize:
Lest it be true
That I can never live in you!

AFFIRMATION



Must it again be so?
Oh thou who treadest fleetly through my soul,
For whom perhaps I do my proudest deed—
In whose clear sight I fain would bare my
thought:
Must it indeed be so?

Again, methinks, there will arise
An unguessed Splendor—an imagined Grace
Not of this world—a wondrous dazzling thing:
Speechless and prostrate I await its word—
It beckons and I come—it stops, I stay—
I make for it a Temple, and I tend
The flickering incense fires by night and day
And sing brave hymns unto a Being strange—
Too strange, alas, and cold!

Again—O God!—that day
When that high idol grovels in the dust!
Then in my desolation shall I dwell
Time beyond reckoning, and I shall think
Bitter and piteous things, and well shall know
My treasure grasped by ordinary hands—
By careless human hands; and I shall turn
E'en from the mountain tops, and there below

In the soft verdant meadows, there will shine
My temple spires to mock me!

Nay, but I know that it cannot be so,
O thou who dwellest in my heart to-night,—
Thou very gracious one!

For hast thou seen two mighty forest trees
Seeded in bygone centuries, which grew
In neighboring spots apart, and year by year
Each sapling drew unto the other closer—
Branch intertwined with branch, then trunk
touched trunk
Until, united in a deep embrace,
They raise their double foliage to the wind
In single strength and perfect symmetry?

O tell me, hast thou seen
Two eager mountain rivers singing white
In sunlit splendor from the snowy peaks,
Mad with the dizzy plunge into the valley?
And hast thou seen them with enraptured spring
Mingle eternally, and murmur on
In steadier, swifter march?

THE FALSE HOPE



I SENT my soul upon a great emprise
Through many a desert and an arid land;
I sent my soul and bade it fare afar:
My soul has travelled true to sign and star
From year to year unfailing—and I stand
And wait, O soul, for tidings of the Prize.

I sent my soul, and bade it travel straight
Nor turn to right nor left—nor ever faint—
And starved and shivering my soul pressed on,
Through realms where light of day has never
shone
Nor living creature stirred—with no complaint;
And on that path pale sorrow was its mate.

I think, O soul, that was a hapless hour,
And thou art breathless now, and at the last,
O soul, I think no treasure wilt thou find:
I seem to hear the echo of the wind
Through proud and empty hallways, where the
Past
Stalks like a ghost, and in its hand is Power.

Yet press thou on a little, for the light
Wreathes the far hills—press on with fearless
stride

Impatient of the cheats of time and place—
E'en through the utmost vacancies of space
Press on! Till at the last thou canst abide
And bear to know thou well has lost the fight!

Then, then, O soul, shalt thou retrace thy way,
And I shall wait thee, and I well shall know
Thou comest till I set another task:
Then, in the wiser noonday, shall I ask,
"O soul, dost know the way that I must go?"
And thou, O soul, shall swiftly answer "Yea!"

ETHEL LEGINSKA



LEGINSKA! Thou hast plunged deep to the haft
The dagger of thy music in my soul,
And no Lethean drug can make me whole.

Thou art bewitched—thy wide-set eyes have
read
Beethoven's high and mystic tragedy,
And Bach's rich scroll has not been hid from
thee.

Thou weavest thy spell about me!—and I know
Thou swayest with a rhythm that is not thine,—
And art afire with ecstasy divine.

Thou art pure disembodied sound—thy hands
Are quick with light—with gesture undesigned
Thou strewest unknown treasures to the wind.

Thou art the shivering reed, that in the dun
And wide morasses where life's waters flow,
Doth tell which way the eternal currents blow.

FRIENDSHIP



My friend,
Let me pour out to thee my inmost heart;
The things that are deep seared upon my soul
Let me reveal to thee.

I do not come a coward seeking aid;
I do not fear life's very swiftest blow,
Nor flinch before the utmost test of all.

Nay, I would say things which can scarce be
said,
But which weigh hard and deeply on my heart;
Which clamor to be said.

Listen to me, O friend,
For know I not thy heart e'en as mine own—
Are not thy secret thoughts my own thoughts
too?

Listen, for of all on earth
I know thou changest least from year to year.
Thou givest thyself for me:
I give myself for thee.

AVE



My heart is full, and yet my lips are sealed—
Sealed are the secret pathways of my mind
Where anguished hopes and fears, untrammelled,
blind,
Press upward into words and are revealed.

My heart is fraught with yearnings deep concealed,
With strivings of a spirit unresigned—
Ye burning thoughts! O be ye unconfined,
Lest in too fierce a fire my soul be steeled!

I sing the glory of a love unwon—
Of her, so far remote and yet so near,
Whom ever to have known is to revere.

I sing a soul of shining fabric spun,
A spirit radiant and quick as air—
Whom yesterday I lost—and O so fair!

THE SONNET



BLIND Milton knew thee, and with purpose high
Thy deep majestic music did invoke,
And strong and solemn words through thee he
spoke,
E'en unto truth eternal drawing nigh.

Keats knew thee, and on wings of fire did fly
To those far realms where beauty first awoke—
Yea to her garment's hem—with daring stroke,
And in a sonnet breathed it with a sigh.

Why tarriest, O sonnet, incomplete?
Why dost not vanish, with perfection filled,
From this unresting earth for evermore?

Yet pausing, messenger with winged feet,
My thought's ethereal liquid, thrice distilled,
Into thy shining chalice let me pour!

PRESENCE AND ABSENCE



COULD I but know
That at this moment—wheresoe'er it be,
Beloved, thou didst think of me!

Would I might go
Invisible, and bear to thee
Some rapid mood of sympathy!

I see thee now, in that accustomed chair
With cheerful talk about thee everywhere,
Alight with that calm understanding look:
Or readest thou perhaps some well-loved book—
Or dost thou flash upon my gaze perchance
In mazes of the dance?
Now—at this moment—as I picture thee—
My spirit seeks thee out unerringly
Through all the distance and uncertainty:
Now some vague bidding fills thine eyes with
thought
And brings that sweet expression, sorrow-
wrought.
Fleet—on the wings of night—oh quickly speed
Out of the shackled present—for I plead
My spirit's secret need!

Ye fruitless, empty fancies—how your lure
Entices me with beckoning obscure—
And still the passing day fades into day;
My love is far away.

I saw to-day my distant mountain land
Uprear its jagged rocks against the sky—
Meseemed that I could touch it with my hand,
Thither I go, my love—thou knowest why—
To seek that treasure which I loved of old,
Whose name thy heart hath told—
Sun-gold that deep within those clefts doth lie
Awaiting him who follows far and high,
Who sees the sight unseen by mortal eye:
Intent, companionless I go
Where vast, unspanned, unfathomed, glow
The treasures that my heart doth know.
Some day with spirit blithe and free
With step and spirit mountain-free
I'll come forever back to thee—
Some day—to thee.

POETRY



A STRANGE flower dost thou nourish, poet,
Which springs fantastic to the light
And opes its curious petals wide,
Complete and shimmering—many dyed—
A thing apart and sanctified.

A frail flower dost thou nourish, poet,
Of fragile shape and texture light,
To blossom darkly and aside
In unguessed corners, and to hide
In secret places, unespied.

A living flower, O poet, is thine
A yearning yet unsatisfied—
A breath of flame across the night—
A passion wrapped in deathless flight:
A cry of hope—a promise bright.

PAGANISM



I SEE the wasting and the strain:
I see men falter on the way
When hearts are wrenched and hopes are slain.
My hands are bound—my strength is weak,
The time-worn words I try to speak—
The steps of time turn not again.

Alas the falsity of earth—
The struggle and the fatal power
Of circumstance—the chance of birth—
The fading vision they must know
Whose step is weak, whose pulse is slow—
When fleeting is the precious hour
And priceless is the minute's worth.

To God thou canst not lift thine eye
In supplication self-deceived
In false security to die—
Thou canst not toy with fancies bright
To hide the sombre hues of night—
Far better has thy soul achieved:
Far nobler is the victor's cry.

I seek thy sorrow to allay—
I raise an unavailing hand
Another's destiny to stay—

And when I think thy way I see
My very heart goes out to thee—
The world is hard, the world is bland—
Thou treadest thy predestined way.

Go, then,—my only gift I'll give—
For empty sham are all the rest—
And gave I not I could not live:
My love I give thee—take it then
And thou art richest among men—
And ownest of all gifts the best
Though stricken and a fugitive.

Ah withered be the outstretched hand
Unmoved by love—and spurned the gift
That binds me with no stronger band
Than avarice and petty pride—
The gates of life lie open wide
The clouds of sorrow know one rift,
And there is quiet in the land.

Then let me drain the bitter drink
And climb with joy the lonely road
To dizzy heights whence flesh must shrink,
If only I may pause and say,
To others travelling the way,
One word to lift the burden's load,
One blessing on destruction's brink.

There is no happiness but this—
To learn more deeply as I go
Through sorrow ever more than bliss—

With fortitude to bear the sight
Of misery that knows not light—
To love more deeply as I know—
To seal my living with a kiss.

AN ANSWER



SPARE yet, O wielder of the lens and rule,
Spare yet a place for contemplation pure—
Be not contemptuous of that bolder school
Who walk with equal step and vision sure
The path where erring reason plays the fool.

Set thou thy mete to pride and heavy care,
Map the abodes of calmness or delight—
Prison the flashing of a woman's hair—
Or with that fabled keenness of thy sight
Transfix the deadly blackness of despair.

Hast thou not seen a vision on the hill
As sweet Aurora sought the arms of Night?
Hast thou not known the stillness more than
still
Of waters dreaming in the evening light—
Of woodlands fading slowly out of sight?

Beware, lest he with beauty at his side
Speak to men's hearts the blindness of thy
creed—
Strike in eternal words thy crabbed pride
Where generations of the world shall read
The shame of one that loveliness denied.

THE TRYST



IMPATIENT one—why can you not wait?
Your lover will come.

When day is over and the scents of evening arise
from the grass,
When the last tint is dwelling in the west
And one star shines—
Then will thine image arise before him
Then will his steps infallibly turn hither,

Be not impatient,
He will come.

THE BALLAD OF THE LOST DUTCHMAN



To the God of open places
My face is turned to-day,
To the magic spell of the desert
And the mountains of far away.

A stranger here I wander
Where the human currents flow
In the herded darkness of the street
Which the city dwellers know.

And the soul of these is money
And they know no rule but might,
And my heart cries out for freedom
From the prison house of night.

O I'm going to travel far from here
Where a man has time to think—
Where a generous soul is all you need
And a heart that does not shrink.

We'll take a pair of burros
And a sack of flour or two
And some spuds and beans and other chuck,
With a gun to see us through.

And soon he died and we laid him out,
And we buried him right there,
And we marked his grave with a wooden cross,
And his gold? We'd had our share.

Do you see the place where the rock tips out,
With the canon far below,
And the crooked cedars stand out black
Right against the line of snow?

Yes, the gold is either down in there
Where the cedar trees begin,
Or right over on the other side
Where those pines go running in.

It's a hard, long climb above that cliff,
But we'll have to make it, so
Keep your fingers on the solid rock,
And you dare not look below.

* * * * *

No, I can't just say the reason why,
But this town will kill me sure,
And I've got the fare, from here to there,
And I need the water cure.



WAR

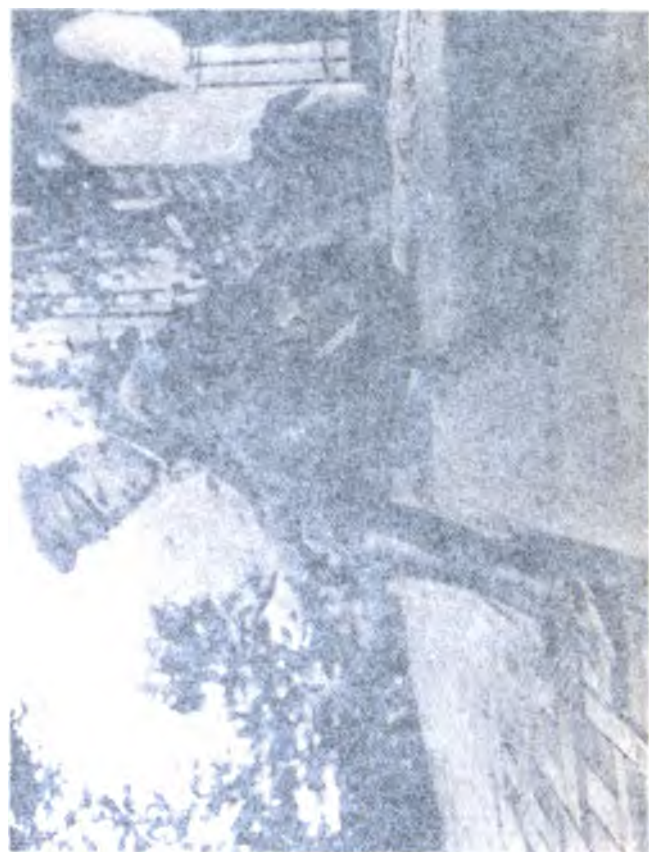


A MOMENT from the hush of peace returns
The marshes and the rest of the world to life,
To grow to nature, where the world is fair,
The forests with its ghostly rose and lily,
While the sweet breath of spring goes on its way.

And now the glinting sunbeams come to rest
On youth that doted and on the young dead,
On garden of a new untarnished flower,
The spirit of the goal we struggle for,
The noble freedom that life ought to see.

Where now the cautious and the coward flee
That bound us in the slavery of the past,
Where now the fears the cowardly have fled,
We stand we proudly now be other ways,
Now dare we look on life with fearless gaze.

Bursts forth anew the ecstasy of love,
The ecstasy of blossoms and the gleam
Of evening light on meadows that glow with red,
Of elm and willow clothed in shining green—
The eternal urging of the love we need.



WAR



A MOMENT from the burnishings of arms
The marchings and the rests—the hurried call,
I draw to nature, where the water charms
The forests with its ghostly rise and fall,
While the sweet breath of spring is over all.

And now the glinting sunlight seems the flame
Of youth that dared and died in years before,
Or guerdon of a new untarnished fame—
The spirit of the goal we struggle for:
The noble freedom that I thought no more.

Where now the cautions and the mocking lies
That bound us in the slavery of days?
Where now the fears the coward deifies?
Ah stand we proudly now on other ways—
Now dare we look on life with level gaze!

Bursts forth anew the eager song of life,
The ecstasy of blossoms and the sheen
Of evening light on meadows shadow-rife—
Of elm and willow clothed in shimmering
green—
The eternal surging of the force unseen!

I yield myself to thee—O sweep me on
Across the seas of life—I am the flame
That burns undimmed in ages without name—
I am the breeze the swallow drifts upon:
All I have loved and lived for can I gain
With one swift shining stroke, nor count the
pain!

A WISH FOR MY BOOK



CHILDREN of idleness! Ye motley crowd
Of many-colored thoughts, ensnared and writ
In this small book which holdeth little wit
And less of profit—dare I claim aloud:

“With these my words have I the world
endowed:
Stop and give heed”? Ah no! When poets have
lit
The centuries with rhyme, ’t would strangely fit
That I should deck you out with phrases proud.

Go forth, my little book! And if thy stay
Be brief, I’ll wish thee not a longer day:
And though thou meet contempt, ’t will matter
not,
Thou hast my thoughts, I change them not a
jot:
My only hope for thee’s embodied here,
If but thou comest sweetly on some ear!

When pleasure dies
There dwells no shadow of the last embrace.
Oblivion and darkness creep apace
Alike upon the careless and the wise
When pleasure dies.

When youth is done
Desire has languished in the arms of care,
The fire of heaven flames not in the air—
And all eternity its course has run
When youth is done.

Then let us live
To seize the wingèd moment ere it pass,
E'en once to fill and drain the slender glass—
If one impassioned rapture life can give
Then let us live.

RELIGION



WE live in an age of science and an age of doubt. The two are correlative. Each is the other's cause. There is scientific certainty, and as to all else there is doubt.

In every age there have been isolated doubters or groups of doubters: but the doubt of today is a widespread, all-pervading thing which the world has not known before. It rises from a new cause.

From Galileo's time, science has fought a winning fight with authority. First-hand knowledge has been demolishing inherited knowledge, and the result has been the wonderful and undreamt of material achievements which make our civilization what it is. And the very starting point of science, whose progress is more like a fairy tale than fact, has been honest, conscientious doubt, a triumphant and revolutionary spirit of doubt.

It is no wonder, then, that one by one the cherished dogmas of the church have been attacked and have succumbed. Science refuses to look at the world through the eyes of nineteen hundred years ago. Science will not be clubbed into submission, and shutting it in dungeons

seems only to sublimate it into something purer and more vigorous. It will not be chained, it will not be blinded.

The church to-day must either teach obvious falsehoods to the credulous, or must retreat into the most tenuous of intellectual hinterlands in order to maintain its infallibility.

To thinking men, the church is dead. To be sure, the forms of religion still sweep on with something of the ancient splendor, and claim lip worship at any rate from the greater number of us. The old forms are clung to with that strange tenacity which is often amusing, sometimes pathetic, always human. Many a man have I heard say, "Of course I do not believe in a personal God—nobody does to-day," and at the same time seriously resent the intimation that he was not religious. But, if you do not believe in a personal God, what kind of a God do you believe in? A sort of omnipresent investing intelligence, you say? But what intelligence have you ever experienced, what intelligence is conceivable, which is not personal?

We must definitely and decisively abandon "belief." Dogma—humbug knowledge, demanding an effort of faith for its assimilation, that is to say a clubbing into insensibility of the intellect, is to-day a palpable fraud—a mere intangible shadow—an unconscientious thing.

What is to fill the place of this religion, which until so recently was a virile and living thing? The needs which were satisfied by religion—if

any such there be—must still be asking satisfaction. How are we to appease them?

Science—scientific thought—claims the right to fill the entire gap. Science as truth has dazzled the world with its splendor of achievement—arrogantly it assumes to be the whole truth—and the dissenting voices seem dumb. The burning question to thoughtful men to-day is “Since religious teachings are untenable, where must we look for guidance?” It is assumed that science offers the only answer.

The church, under threat of an avenging providence and of eternal damnation, enjoined upon us love of God, of our fellow-beings, and in general what is known as righteous and upright conduct.

To-day, no longer terrorized by God nor asking any benefits of him, we say in a scientific—that is to say, thoughtful—way “why is this conduct good?” “why is it righteous?” We then conclude that “good” and “righteous” are labels which are appended to the course of conduct which is best for society at large. From this we deduce the rule that we should do those things which are for the good of society, and should avoid those things which injure society if we should prosper in the world.

This is all very well so far as it goes, but are these data entirely to be trusted? Do they take the place of the principles, say, of Christ or Buddha? I think, most emphatically, no. For there is a realm which is as unknown to science

to-day as it is unknowable,—and is yet the most important factor in our lives. It has been called the realm of the soul. It is perhaps the unconscious total of all our past experience—the sum of our conclusions, yearnings, aspirations and beliefs—of our successes and failures—of all we have lived in the past or hoped for the future.

The processes of the subconscious part of our nature are deeply hidden—nor can we ever hope to disentangle, trace, or name them. Here, unknown to us, reasoning takes place in a flash—influenced by delicate factors of which we have no inkling—and a conclusion shines into our minds as an “intuition.” Intuitions are at the same time the most perfect and the most inexplicable expression of ourselves. It is the myth whereby the muse, a person from without, inspires the poet to write. Who can give the rules for composing a symphony? The composer himself knows them not.

It is precisely here, at the most vital point of all, that blind science strikes a treacherous blow at our welfare. No less a person than William James, seeking in vain the social value of music, except as an exhibition of technical skill, declared it mere sensuous indulgence,—nothing more. By the scientific ideal, all serious-minded men should turn their efforts to something really beneficial to the community, and leave such idle baubles to those whose highest aim is to tickle their over-developed sensibilities, and whose

purpose is frankly self-gratification. Must we then choose between this doctrine and an impossible return to the outworn superstition of the church? The church at least brought us grandeur of line—music, color, and restfulness. Our sense of beauty, of thought, of surroundings, was satisfied: our craving for beauty was ministered to. Can science tell us that all this is not only useless, but is positively bad?

Does not something rise within us and assert that this so-called scientific conclusion is a lie, a damnable and stultifying lie? What is this something? Is it not a verdict arrived at by a far surer method than any articulate reasoning? Should we not then trust this, to the utter confusion of articulate reasoning, simply because we are in a realm too delicate for articulation?

No: let us discard God, immortality and miracle, but let us not be untrue to ourselves. Let science speak in its own realm—that of conscious knowledge—and where science stops let us go on much farther—knowing that we have the surest of guides. We must believe in ourselves. We must follow, and not stifle our instincts: we must follow our “inspirations,” once called divine. Instead of invoking divinity to earth, we of to-day must elevate ourselves to divinity—we must realize that all divinity is in us—that we ourselves are our own gods.

Once we attain to this, any other “belief” seems needless. Rules and systems are nothing to us. It becomes our object not to do this be-

cause, by rule, it is good; or to avoid that, because, by rule, it is bad—but sincerely to realize ourselves: nothing more, nothing less. Here is the one route to true happiness, which is the end of life. Let us then break all rules; let us refuse forever to be bound by any rule or limited by any fact. Let us obey the promptings of the spirit (I cannot discard the old terms), inscrutable though they be. Every man, provided he is true to himself, is as “good” as every other, nor is he called upon to be a missionary if he would live the most perfect life. What matter whether he dig ditches or paint pictures? The bad people in this world are the unhappy people—equally those forced into lives of crime and misery and those who have forced themselves into lives of angular sanctity. Self-realization is the one rule of life—it cannot be resolved into principles of conduct—its progress can never be weighed, measured, tabulated, or directed. He who denies this denies himself—which is the most wretched thing in the world.

THE
MUSEUM OF
THE
CITY OF
NEW YORK
AND
THE
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

**THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE
STAMPED BELOW**

AN INITIAL FINE OF 25 CENTS

**WILL BE ASSESSED FOR FAILURE TO RETURN
THIS BOOK ON THE DATE DUE. THE PENALTY
WILL INCREASE TO 50 CENTS ON THE FOURTH
DAY AND TO \$1.00 ON THE SEVENTH DAY
OVERDUE.**

NOV 2 1939

29 Nov '57 LS

REC'D LD

NOV 14 1957

15 Mar '60 BM

REC'D LD

MAR 2 1963

9/c
psv
100

YC 106204

401041

Cooper

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

